

REMARKS

Claims 1-56 have been examined. Applicant hereby amends claims 1, 8, 13, 25, 37, and 48-51. No claims have been added or canceled.

The Examiner has objected to Figure 3 for not having a "prior art" legend. A proposed drawing correction is submitted herewith.

The Examiner has further objected to the drawings for failing to show the "audio amplification device". As explained in the specification, and in particular at page 4, lines 5-8, the subject invention relates generally to the field of audio amplification, especially for hearing aids. It is well understood that hearing aids are members of the generic classification of audio amplification devices. Such devices are indeed shown in the drawings. In particular, Figures 4-7 are functional block diagrams of hearing aids (audio amplification devices) in accordance with the claimed invention. Accordingly, Applicant believes that the drawings fully meet the requirements of 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a) and that no amendment is necessary.

Claims 1, 2, 25, 39, 48, 49, 53 and 55 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. The Examiner contends that the "audio amplification device" recited in these claims has not been clearly defined by the specification. Applicant respectfully disagrees. The exemplary embodiments described in the specification are hearing aids. Such devices are widely used and well understood to constitute audio amplification devices, i.e., devices that amplify audio signals. Similar audio amplification devices are widely used in many well-known applications, including, for example, telephones, radios, televisions, etc. Persons of even rudimentary skill in the art readily understand what is meant by "audio amplification device".

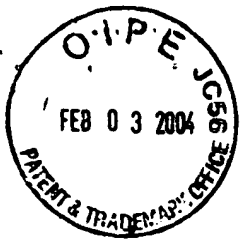
All claims other than claims 13-15, 50 and 51 have been rejected under either 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Reames or § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Reames in combination with Soli et al., Williamson and/or Tzeng. Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner's reliance on Reames is misplaced. All of the claims of the subject application are

directed to feedback cancellation in an audio amplification device. This is totally unrelated to the invention disclosed by Reames. Reames discloses a system for enhancing a voice signal. Basically, the system removes audio signal components with frequencies higher than the voice band and adaptively cancels noise that overlaps the voice band. While it is true that Reames uses a feedback signal as an input to the adaptive filter, this has nothing whatsoever to do with the cancellation of acoustic feedback, which is the subject matter of Applicant's invention.

Since Reames is directed to a fundamentally different purpose than the subject invention, Reames fails to teach or suggest significant elements of the invention. In particular, since Reames has nothing to do with feedback cancellation, there is no teaching or suggestion in Reames concerning the identification of unstable frequencies. Furthermore, there is no teaching or suggestion of a band limiting filter with a passband limited to a frequency band containing the unstable frequencies.

Although Applicant believes that the claims originally presented in the application are patentably distinguishable over Reames and the prior art in general, Applicant has hereby amended independent claims 1, 25, 48 and 49 to more clearly recite the filtering of the unstable frequency domain. In view of the foregoing remarks and the amendments presented herein, Applicant believes that claims 1-12, 16-49 and 52-56 are now in condition for allowance.

The Examiner has indicated that claims 13-15, 50 and 51 recite patentable subject matter and would be in condition for allowance if presented in independent form. Applicant has hereby amended claims 13 and 50 to place them in independent form. Claims 14 and 15 depend from claim 13 and claim 51 depends from claim 50. Accordingly, Applicant believes that all of claims 13-15, 50 and 51 are now in condition for allowance.



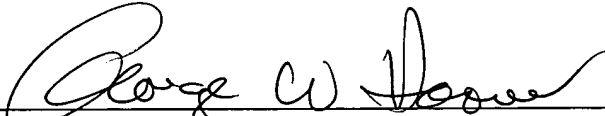
A Notice of Allowance of all claims pending in the application is respectfully requested at the earliest possible date.

Respectfully submitted,

BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR & ZAFMAN LLP

Dated: January 30, 2004

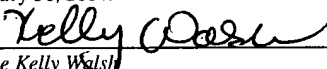
By: _____


George W Hoover
Reg. No. 32,992

12400 Wilshire Boulevard
Seventh Floor
Los Angeles, California 90025
(310) 207-3800

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Name Kelly Walsh
Date January 30, 2004